

Please amend the present application as follows:

Specification

The following is a copy of Applicant's specification that identifies language being added with underlining ("____") and language being deleted with strikethrough ("~~—~~"), as is applicable:

Page 4, line 11 through 12.

FIG. 2 is a detail view A-A of a transmission assembly of the apparatus shown in ~~FIG. 10~~ FIG. 1.

Page 7, line 13 through page 9, line 2.

The apparatus shown also includes two geartrains or transmission assemblies 1008, 1010 adapted to translate a downward force from the footboard 1000 to a rotational force. Greater or fewer numbers of geartrains or transmission assemblies can be used in accordance with the invention. As shown in FIG. 1, each of the transmission assemblies 1008, 1010 includes a respective casing 1012, 1014, hinge joint 1016, 1018, rack 1020, 1022, helical compression spring 1024, 1026, and a set of wheels 1028, 1030. The casings 1012, 1014 each house a series of gears (shown in FIGS. 3 and 4) that translate the vertical movement of the racks 1020, 1022 to respective rotations of the sets of wheels 1028, 1030. The hinge joints 1016, 1018 are each adapted to transfer force between the footboard 1000 and the respective racks 1020, 1022 and are further adapted to mount the transmission assemblies 1008, 1010 to the lower surface of the footboard 1000. The racks 1020, 1022 each extend vertically upward from the respective casings

1012, 1014 towards the lower surface of the footboard 1000, and each rack 1020, 1022 rotates at least one gear inside the respective casing 1012, 1014. An upper end of each rack 1020, 1022 includes a respective head 1032, 1034 that travels vertically with respect to a respective mounting cup or hinge joint mount 1036, 1038. In the embodiment shown, the heads 1032, 1034 are retained within the hinge joint mounts 1036, 1038 by a U-shaped key 1039 that mounts to a corresponding slot in each respective rack 1020, 1022. The mounting cups or hinge joint mounts 1036, 1038 connect to the lower surface of the footboard 1000, and control the vertical and lateral travel of the heads 1032, 1034. The hinge joint mounts 1036, 1038 permit the heads 1032, 1034 to pivot and slide laterally as well as travel vertically within the hinge joint mounts 1036, 1038. The vertical and lateral travel of the heads 1032, 1034 provide a range and degree of freedom for the racks 1020, 1022 to move during driving and turning of the apparatus. The mounting cups or hinge joint mounts 1036, 1038 can include a cushioning material such as a rubber sock to minimize metal-to-metal contact between the heads 1032, 1034 and the interiors of the mounting cups or hinge joint mounts 1036, 1038. The helical compression springs 1024, 1026 each mount circumferentially around a portion of the respective rack 1020, 1022 extending between the footboard 1000 and the casings 1012, 1014 such that an end of each spring 1024, 1026 is adjacent to the lower surface of the footboard 1000 or respective hinge joint mount 1036, 1038, and an opposing end of the springs 1024, 1026 is adjacent to the upper surface of the respective casing 1012, 1014. Both helical compression springs 1024, 1026 are preloaded. The springs 1024, 1026 can then be further loaded by applying a downward force to the footboard 1000, such as a user standing on the upper surface of the footboard 1000.

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A set of adjustment bolts 1076, 1078 mount to each respective steering linkage 1060, 1062, and provide control adjustments for each steering linkage 1060, 1062. Each set of adjustment bolts 1076, 1078 includes a pair of bolts positioned parallel to and on opposing sides of the hinges 1056, 1058, and through a set of stops 1080, 1082 mounted to the steering linkages 1060, 1062. The sets of adjustment bolts 1076, 1078 permit selective control of the range of pivoting motion of the transmission assemblies 1008, 1010 with respect to the steering support 1040. When greater turning control of the apparatus is desired, either or both sets of adjustment bolts 1076, 1078 can be loosened. Loosening either or both sets of adjustment bolts 1076, 1078 provides a greater range of movement or freedom for the respective hinges ~~1056, 1058~~ 1072, 1074 to move with respect to the transmission assemblies 1008, 1010. Likewise, when less turning control of the apparatus is desired, either or both sets of adjustment bolts 1076, 1078 can be tightened. Tightening either or both sets of adjustment bolts 1076, 1078 provides a lesser range of movement or freedom for the respective hinges ~~1056, 1058~~ 1072, 1074 to move with respect to the transmission assemblies 1008, 1010.

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FIG. 4 illustrates a perspective view of a set of gears for the rear transmission assembly of the apparatus shown in FIG. 1. FIG. 4 shows the rack 1022 engaged with rack gear 1200. The rack gear 1200 mounts to a shaft 1202. A second gear 1204 mounts to the shaft 1202. The second gear 1204 mounts the shaft 1202 with a first one-way clutch or first overrunning clutch 1206. The first overrunning clutch 1206 is set in a similar

driving direction as the rack gear 1200 so that downward movements of the rack 1022 rotate the shaft 1202 in a clockwise direction. A third gear 1208 mounts to an intermediate shaft 1210. The third gear 1208 engages the second gear 1204, and receives force from the second gear 1204. In turn, the third gear 1208 transfers the force to the intermediate shaft 1210. A fourth gear ~~1212~~ 1209 mounts to the intermediate shaft 1210, and engages a fifth gear ~~1214~~ 1212 mounted to an axle 1216. The fourth gear ~~1212~~ 1209 engages the fifth gear ~~1214~~ 1212, and transfers force from the intermediate shaft 1210 to the fifth gear ~~1214~~ 1212. In turn, the fifth gear ~~1214~~ 1212 transfers force from the fourth gear ~~1212~~ 1209 to the axle 1216. A set of wheels 1030 mounts to the axle 1216 via a second one-way or overrunning clutch ~~1218~~ 1031 in each wheel. Note that the shafts 1202, 1210 and axle 1216 are supported by the casing 1014. The set of wheels 1030 mounts to the axle 1216, with one wheel positioned at each end of the axle 1216. Conventional bearings for rotation of the shafts 1202, 1210, axle 1216, and set of wheels 1030 are used.

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FIGS. 5A and 5B illustrate the operation of a steering support for the apparatus shown in FIG. 1. FIG. 5A is a bottom schematic view of the apparatus shown in FIG. 1, with the wheels oriented for moving the apparatus in a forward direction. FIG. 5B is another bottom view of the apparatus shown in FIG. 1, with the wheels oriented for turning the direction of the apparatus. Note that the illustrations shown are schematic views illustrating operation of the apparatus shown in FIG. 1. As shown in FIG. ~~44A~~ 5A, the steering support 1040 is in a substantially straight orientation with respect to the front

transmission assembly 1008 and rear transmission assembly 1010. The set of wheels 1028 for the front transmission assembly 1008 is in a similar orientation as the set of wheels 1030 for the rear transmission assembly 1010. In the orientation shown, the apparatus can travel in a relatively straight direction, such as a substantially forward direction 1400 direction.